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# Child Care Food Program

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child Care Food Program helps get nutritious meals to preschool and school-aged children in child care facilities. Through USDA grants-in-aid or other means, States can initiate, maintain, or expand nonprofit food service programs for children in institutions providing child care.

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## WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR INSTITUTIONS?

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Any licensed public or private nonprofit institution providing nonresidential day care services may be eligible. Such institutions include, but are not limited to, day care centers, settlement houses, recreation centers, family day care programs, Head Start centers, and institutions providing day care service for handicapped children. Participating institutions must serve nutritious meals to all children regardless of race, color, or national origin.

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## WHAT ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO INSTITUTIONS?

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USDA gives funds to eligible institutions for costs involved in obtaining, preparing, and serving meals meeting USDA requirements. Commodities, or cash in lieu of commodities, are available to supplement the meal service. In addition, the administering agency is available to provide technical assistance.

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## HOW DOES AN INSTITUTION APPLY FOR THE PROGRAM?

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Institutions interested in the program may apply directly to the agency administering the program in individual States. To obtain the name of the appropriate agency in your State, write to the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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## WHAT IS THE LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM?

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The Special Food Service Program, summer and year round, was authorized in 1968 under Section 13 of the National School Lunch Act and began operating in December of that year. Recent changes which include dividing this program into two independent programs—the Child Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program for Children—have been authorized under the Amendments of 1975 to the National School Lunch Act and Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

This publication supersedes FNS-79, "Special Food Service Program for Children."

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